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# Chinese Move Ahead Militarily

The mainland Chinese, more determined than ever to become a global power, are moving ahead relentlessly to perfect a military machine that will turn their ambition into reality.

I reported on March 26 that they had developed an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of dropping nuclear warheads on the United States or the Soviet Union. The Chinese confirmed this on May 18 by announcing the successful test of such a missile.

Since then, we have seen a top-secret Defense Department document giving more details about the Chinese ICBM. The knockout punch now available to Peking is the subject of grave discussions in military circles around the world.

The Pentagon projection, written in December, assessed three potential U.S. adversaries — Red China, North Korea and the Soviet Union. It stated that the Chinese strategic force "consists almost exclusively of intermediate-range ballistic missiles and a few obsolescent bombers" — in short, no immediate threat to the U.S. mainland.

But then the report added ominously: "The Chinese expect to have a nuclear capability to strike the Soviet Union west of the Urals and the CONUS [continental United States] within a year."

The document noted that the Chinese had tested their ICBM rocket — the CSSX4 — four times in 1979, and estimated the range at 13,000 kilometers, or about 8,000 miles.

"Within a 13,000-kilometer range, the CSSX4 will give China an expanded nuclear targeting capability, including the capability to strike targets in the United States," the report added. It reported that "initial operating capability is expected in 1980."

The Chinese tested their CSSX4 twice in May. According to intelligence sources who monitored both shots, the Chinese missile traveled 8,900 miles to its landing in the South Pacific. This is more than enough range to plaster military targets and population centers in the United States.

The secret Pentagon document predicted deployment of the Chinese missiles sometime this year "at two silos under construction in central China."

Our intelligence resources can't tap into the computers that would identify the targets, but intelligence experts are presuming the Chinese missiles will be aimed at the Russians, for the moment. "They are still the number one enemy," a China-watcher told my associate Dale Van Atta.